



Water cuts are on

McDonald's Australia is trialling water saving equipment in a number of its restaurants with a view to significantly reducing water use.



ABOVE: Impressive environmental initiatives give a 'new age' water-sensitive landscape at McDonald's Delahey restaurant.

TOP: Push-button pillar taps have been installed at the Kingsford restaurant and will be rolled out to all new restaurants.

McDonald's celebrated its 30th birthday in Australia by joining the Every Drop Counts Business Program in 2001. Since 1999, all new McDonald's restaurants have been fitted with water efficient devices and McDonald's is continually reviewing water saving solutions that can be applied across the board. There are 740 McDonald's company-owned and franchised restaurants in Australia serving more than a million customers each day.

"We have a massive upgrade program underway and we're considering a range of options to improve water efficiency," McDonald's Director Environment Management, Roslyn Dent said.

Every Drop Counts water audits were undertaken in 2002/03 on properties that reflected the variety of buildings in which McDonald's restaurants operate.

They picked a restaurant on George Street in the city opposite Strand Arcade, a restaurant with significant mature landscaping at Granville and a new restaurant in Kingsford.

and the impact on our customers and operations before we make any decision to roll out to other restaurants,” McDonald’s Development Manager – Design, Patrick Leong said.

“McDonald’s is committed to expanding the application of water saving initiatives to new restaurants and to retrofit existing ones as they fall due for major refurbishment...”

The audits identified that 26 per cent of water was used on irrigation, 24 per cent was used in the kitchens (mainly hot water for cleaning) and 37 per cent in the amenities. The results showed that by improving amenities and landscaping practices a 25 per cent water saving is achievable.

McDonald’s has an innovative approach to the look and design of its stores and one of the most impressive environmental initiatives underway is a water-sensitive landscape trial. McDonald’s commenced the trial in mid-2005 at the Delahey restaurant in north west Melbourne.

the menu at McDonald's



A water efficient spray nozzle that uses one third of the water at the same pressure is being trialled at the Kingsford restaurant.

As a result of the audits McDonald’s is trialling a number of initiatives across different restaurants. These include:

- low flow spray nozzle (6 L/min) on the kitchen wash up hose that uses one third of the water at the same pressure
- halving the water flow in the kitchen hand wash sink to just 3 L/min
- installing push button pillar taps on a three second timer in the public amenities
- installing dual flush 4 L/2 L flow adjustable toilets that use 30 per cent less than industry standard systems
- installing waterless urinals (non return valve type) or low flush urinals, with inbuilt sensors that only flush a single service at a time (compared to existing systems that tend to flush all services regardless of user numbers).

“We need to thoroughly assess the capability of these devices through trials and monitoring to gauge their suitability

The design incorporates swales (grass lined drains that catch and convey water) to direct water into planted areas, and a car park surface engineered to harvest stormwater. Stormwater run-off is directed towards the gardens where the flow is broken up and held using large rocks and mulch, reducing the need for irrigation. The design incorporates drought tolerant plants and features a sub-surface drip irrigation system with low evaporation levels.

“This design could save up to 75 per cent of water used in a typical landscaped McDonald’s restaurant. The higher capital costs will be off-set by the much lower maintenance costs,” Roslyn said.

“McDonald’s is committed to expanding the application of water saving initiatives to new restaurants and to retrofit existing ones as they fall due for major refurbishment. This is part of our role as an evolving business and in line with McDonald’s strategic objectives of simplification, overall cost reduction and environmental management.”